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DE RUEHCV #0183 0412159

ZNR UUUUU ZZH

P 102159Z FEB 09

FM AMEMBASSY CARACAS

TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 2577

INFO RUCNMEM/EU MEMBER STATES COLLECTIVE PRIORITY

RUEHWH/WESTERN HEMISPHERIC AFFAIRS DIPL POSTS PRIORITY

RUMIAAA/HQ USSOUTHCOM MIAMI FL PRIORITY

RHEHNSC/NSC WASHDC PRIORITY

UNCLAS CARACAS 000183

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

DEPARTMENT PASS TO AID/OTI (RPORTER)

HQSOUTHCOM ALSO FOR POLAD

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: PGOV KDEM VE

SUBJECT: FEBRUARY 15 TERM LIMITS REFERENDUM: BY THE NUMBERS

(SBU) The following statistics provide background information regarding Venezuela's February 15 referendum on eliminating term limits for all elected positions:

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ELECTION DAY  
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Polls Open: 6:00am (5:30am EST)  
Polls Close: 18:00pm (17:30pm EST)  
Polling Places: 11,297  
Electronic Voting Machines: 34,541  
Digital Fingerprint Scanning Machines: 11,422  
States that will Deploy Digital Fingerprint Scanning Machines: 8  
Polling Places that will be Equipped with Digital Fingerprint Scanning Machines: 3,658  
Poll Workers Required on Election Day: 101,397  
Eligible Voters: 16,767,511  
Registered Voters Living Abroad Eligible to Vote: 57,368  
Number of Voters in Washington, DC: 1464  
Number of Voters in Miami: 15,846  
Number of Voters in Houston: 2195  
Number of Voters in New York: 2116  
Number of Voters in Havana: 1464  
Number of Voters in Puerto Rico: 874  
Current Presidential Term Limit: 2 terms  
Presidential Term: 6 years  
Current National Assembly Term Limit: 3 terms  
National Assembly Term: 5 years  
Gubernatorial Term Limit: 2 terms  
Gubernatorial Term: 4 years  
Mayoral Term Limit: 2 terms  
Mayoral Term: 4 years  
Days Before Elections in Which Polls May Not be Made Public: 7  
Hours Before Elections in Which Alcohol May Not be Sold: 40  
Members of the Armed Forces Working on Election Day: 140,000  
Estimated Voting Time Per Voter: 20 seconds  
Allowed Time Per Vote: 3 minutes  
Months Since Nationwide State and Local Elections: 3  
Months Until Nationwide Municipal Council Elections: 6

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PREVIOUS ELECTIONS  
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Pro-Government Governors Elected in 2008: 17

Opposition Governors Elected in 2008: 5

Percent of "No" Votes in 2007 Constitutional Reform

Referendum: 51%

Percent of Votes Chavez Won in 2006 Presidential Race: 62%

Percent of Votes Chavez Won in 2004 Recall Referendum: 59%

Rate of Abstention in 2008 State and Local Elections: 35%

Rate of Abstention in 2007 Constitutional Reform Referendum: 44%

Rate of Abstention in 2006 Presidential Race: 25%

Rate of Abstention in 2005 Parliamentary Elections (boycotted by Opposition): 75%

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ELECTION MONITORING  
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Political Organizations Registered with "Yes" Campaign: 16  
Political Organizations Registered with the "No" Campaign: 34  
Voting Machines Audited In Presence of "Yes" and "No" Campaign witnesses: 200

Percentage of Voting Machines Audited on Election Day: 54.3%

CNE Invited National Election Observers: 1200

International Election Observer Missions: 0

Venezuelan Civil Society Groups Accredited to Observe

Elections: 4

Estimated Percentage of Voting Tables "No" Poll Watchers Will Cover: 90%

Embassy Personnel Involved in Informal Election Observation: 33

CAULFIELD